

## Hunting "Jack the Ripper"

Thrilling Experiences of a Man Who Posed as Decoy in Woman's Garb.

(John T. Sullivan, in Denver Post.)

The recent scare among Denver women because of the raids of the Capitol hill thug reminds me of the reign of terror among the denizens of the Whitechapel district, London, during the months of September and November, 1888. I had been in London for some months, playing at Henry Irving's Lyceum theatre, and during the months mentioned was appearing as Joseph Surface, with Kate Vaughan, in "The School for Scandal."

"Jack the Ripper" was a common phrase around the town. Those three words, "Jack the Ripper," were enough to blanch the cheek of every woman and send children shrieking into their homes. No one could understand the reign of terror that there existed, and strangely, Commercial class fear is an unusual emotion.

No one had ever met the creature and lived to tell the tale, so that impalpable mystery seemed to surround him. It was this element of the wonderful that assisted in making his murders successful.

The first murder was that of a woman described as a bear-eyed hag. She was found on an embankment in the Whitechapel district, her throat cut from ear to ear, her body frightfully mutilated.

The second victim was Martha Turner, a hawker. Her body was found on the first floor landing of the George-yard buildings, in Commercial road, Spitalfields, Tuesday, Aug. 7.

The third was Mary Ann Nichols. This murder occurred two days later in Burks row, near the house of Mrs. Green.

The fourth victim was Annie Chapman, who was killed Aug. 17 in the back yard of a Mr. Richardson, 29 Hanbury street.

The fifth was on Sept. 23, when an unknown woman was found dead at Gateshead, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

The sixth was Hipply Lip Annie, Sept. 20, on Berners street. Her throat was cut, but before he could mutilate her the murderer was frightened away.

The seventh happened fifteen minutes later on the southwest corner of Mitre square. The murdered woman was unknown.

The eighth victim was found Oct. 1 on the site of the intended Metropolitan opera house. She was unknown and the body was decomposed.

The ninth occurred Nov. 9. Jane Lawrence was the unfortunate. She was killed in her room on Dorset street.

The tenth crime was committed Nov. 23, and the victim was without a name. During the ten days prior to this, 1888, ten crimes of an identical character to those perpetrated in Whitechapel were committed in Managua, Nicaragua.

July 17, 1889, a doctor in London, at times demented, confessed that he had used surgical instruments at times when he was unconscious and had not assisted in any operation.

**Victims All of One Class.**

This was all the data obtainable. The victims were all dissolute women, and the same sort of mutilation characterized each case. The throat was invariably cut—as a rule from ear to ear—and the body was savagely slashed and mutilated.

It was the night of Sept. 3, 1888, that made London great as it is, roared indignation from center to circumference. In Berners street, Commercial road, Whitechapel, the body of a woman, identified as Hipply Lip Annie, was found by a milkmaid still warm and cut and mutilated as in the other cases, thus adding another to the crimes of "Jack the Ripper."

Twenty minutes later, at a distance of a mile, a policeman stumbled over the body of a woman in Mitre square. She had been similarly murdered.

When you take into consideration the fact that on that very night, in Berners street, there was a social gathering of the members of the Working-men's club, the Berners street chapel, and that these men were continually going back and forth to the "pub" adjoining the archway where the woman was found, it seems almost incredible that a murder could have been committed without noise or screams that could have been heard by the revelers. It was only twelve feet from the body to the door of the saloon.

**Murders Deeply Mysterious.**

Still more incredible seems the next murder. The Berners street body was found at 11:20 p. m. The Mitre square body was found at 11:40, yet the policeman, at 11:35, had passed down Mitre street within twenty-five feet of Mitre square and had looked in and had seen nothing wrong.

On his return at 11:40, in passing the square under a gas lamp at the immediate corner, the policeman saw a woman lying on the ground. Running to her assistance he discovered that another victim of "Jack the Ripper" was in evidence. He had the body taken to the Old Jewry station house.

When you consider that it would take twenty minutes, as it took me, to walk from Berners street to Commercial road; up that road to Whitechapel; west on Whitechapel to Mitre square, one wonders how this thing was done.

The next morning London rang with the news. The papers devoted pages to it, calling on the police to suppress this scourge. Scotland Yard put in its best men, and Sir Charles Warren, since famous in the Boer war, the London's chief of police, called upon the guards and volunteers to patrol Whitechapel thoroughly. At least 2,300 men were serving as detectives in that celebrated district.

**Interest Was Universal.**

Nath., . . . at cases were interested; particularly so were the American residents of London, of whom there were a great number at that time. We used to meet, probably twelve to twenty of us, after the performance at the theatres, at the Victoria hotel. A number of the boys felt like volunteering.

I might say, incidentally, that the city of London had offered £1,000 reward for the apprehension of the murderer. Sir Charles Warren offered another £1,000. The ward of aldermen offered another £1,000, and at last the reward aggregated £5,000. This was to be paid to anyone producing "Jack the Ripper" dead or alive.

No one could give any description of him, as none who had met him had ever lived to describe him. Various theories were offered as to his identity, but all were faulty and useless.

The only thing to be done was to catch him red-handed—but how was this to be done? Well, we Americans thought we could solve the problem. During the month of August a number of us attended a garden party, given by Lady Mackenzie at her charming villa on the Surrey side. In presenting a charade I appeared in a surcoat of a vivandiere masquerading as a guardsman, but still a woman. It was a very clever conceit, and William King of Buffalo, son of millionaire King, suggested a plan for catching "Jack the Ripper."

King had seen me at this garden party, and two nights after the double murder at the Victoria hotel he started us all by saying: "I've got the plan of catching 'Jack the Ripper'; and it's the only one."

**Jack's Only Prospect.**

We all exclaimed, "What is it, Billy?"

"Well," he said, turning to me, "Jack it's up to you—it concerns you principally."

Answering my look of inquiry and turning to the boys, he said:

"The plan is this: Jack, here, looked so like a woman the other day that

he could easily pass for one. Now, let him dress as a woman—not too swell, but like the Whitechapel women—and patrol the streets and alleys and yards.

"We will follow him up—have our guns ready, and, if he is accosted, close in on the man—and that is the only way 'Jack the Ripper' will ever be caught."

"Needless to say, I didn't look at the scheme in quite the same optimistic light that my friend King did, as the fact was evident that the women who had been killed had never had time to even utter a cry."

I was not so sure whether it would be "Jack the Ripper" or I who would "get it."

Well, we sat discussing the plan until daylight, and they finally persuaded me that it was my duty to go masquerading in Whitechapel—a perilous errand, mind you—provided I was given permission by Sir Charles Warren to carry a revolver or a knife, to defend myself. Incidentally, too, there was the question of the £25,000 reward, beside the glory and renown to be attained.

**In Skirts and Wig.**

At 7 o'clock in the morning I was at the shop of Madame Auguste, a sister of the late Sir Augustus Harris. She was the best costumer in London, and had furnished me many dresses for the parts I had played. She entered into the plan enthusiastically, fixing me up with a hat, waist and skirt.

At 8 o'clock I was at the house of a noted perruquier of King street, Covent Garden, got up a wig for me at short notice. By 9 o'clock in the afternoon I was duly rigged out and looked like a healthy country girl. I had a slit made on the right side of my skirt that opened on a leather holster, which was to hold the revolver, a hammerless Smith & Wesson, which I had brought from America.

Meantime, while I was contriving the costume, the boys were arranging a permit for my appearance and for permission to carry firearms. Warren, the chief of police, thought a great deal of the scheme, but considered that there was great risk attached to it. He willingly gave the permit for my costume so far as the police authorities were concerned, but absolutely refused the permit to carry arms.

Nothing daunted, I went down to Scotland Yard and told my story to Marshall, one of the most famous detectives in England. He assured me that the permit to pass the police lines would also include a defensive weapon, and told me to go ahead.

**On a Perilous Mission.**

It was the night of Oct. 2, 1888, that I left the Globe theatre, where I was playing, and started on my perilous but extremely fascinating undertaking. It was 10:30 o'clock, and King and Elliott, fellow Americans whom I have mentioned, were with me. I was fully equipped. My revolver I could feel pressing against my thigh at every step. I reached through the slit I had made in my dress and found the revolver ready for use. It was arranged in a pouch, by which I could reach in any direction and shoot through my skirt in such fashion as I pleased, and at a moment's notice.

I cannot quite describe my sensations. I was all excitement through holding myself down and displaying no trepidation. I knew the great risk I ran. I was to become a target. I was going out to be killed—unless I showed quicker with my revolver than the "Ripper" was with his knife, and my careful swiftness and certainty with that weapon were indispensable.

**Start For the Slums.**

Well, at the Globe theatre we entered a bus, went through the Strand into Fleet street, to Ludgate Hill, through St. Paul's churchyard, into Whitechapel. At Commercial road we alighted and then began our quest.

We entered a couple of "pubs" near Spitalfields market, went into the women's bar and mingled with the many nabobs of the district. I was attracted some attention from the men, but the men paid no attention to me. Out into the street again, over through the market and then into the slums and mews of the wickedest part of London.

To be sure my friends, dressed as sailors and rolling along drunkenly as if they were tars just given shore leave and out for a holiday, followed me closely. But they were always twenty or more yards behind me, and I kept my hand on my revolver and thought of the "Ripper" and his swift work.

I was a plain country hussy, not over particular as to neatness and willing to drink with any of the hardened male debauchees whom I met. I made my second stop at a "pub" called "The Twin Anchors." I pretended to be considerably under the influence of liquor. I called to the men to come and drink with me. They did so without comment. They were meanly dressed and dirty, but they made no effort of affront. My two watchful trailers halted and peered in the time bantering two women of the streets.

**Failed to Find Trouble.**

After I got my drink and found that nobody had any indignities or insults to offer, I reeled along the purlieus of ignorance, filth and vice, working my way through the Whitechapel district.

But I want to say now, and I remarked it with astonishment at the time, that not once during the entire fortnight which I gave to this work was I offered insult, or even accosted, by the best or the worst of those debauched denizens of that horribly dirty and most vicious and uncontrolled district.

The sights I saw would disgust a satyr. The drunkenness, the wantonness, the villainy, the foul language and utter depravity of the Whitechapel district are things I will never forget.

Whitechapel, you know, has no counterpart in any other country. This great, populous home of the debauched is a perfect labyrinth of twisting alleyways, queer-shaped corners, blind passages and all sorts of odd nooks and corners. It is easy to get lost there, and one might wander for days without encountering a familiar locality to guide him back to his starting point.

**Mid Scenes of Squallor.**

In these courts and narrow passages, thousands of hucksters and peddlers back their wares at night. In many places these vehicles are so closely packed together that it takes ten minutes to wind among them for the space of a square. The entire district is at night a perfectly safe harbor for thieves, cut-throats and all manner of social outcasts. The masses of depraved and debauched humanity I saw during the month of August were pictures of villainy that so impressed me that they remain as vividly in my mind today as that first night when, with my false hair tousled like that of the veriest drab, my face smudged with soot and my hand ever pressing the pistol inside my dress, I wandered through the mazes of that great, dark area of filth and drunkenness, and the mystery of sudden, horrible and totally inexplicable death.

I soon grew sick of the sights I saw and, but for the overpowering interest of the quest and my keen desire to meet and see and conquer this bloody fiend who kept the thousand silly tongues of Whitechapel wagging, I should have given up the undertaking after the first two hours. But, as it was, my determination increased each moment—and I will tell you that I had some thrilling moments, too.

**Followed by Friends.**

My friends, dressed as roystering sailors and playing the parts with great effect, were always within forty or fifty yards of me, but they could

not keep me every moment in sight. There were sharp angles to turn, and I must turn them, else be detected. I realized how easy it would be, unless I proceeded with unusual caution, to be struck down from behind, from overhead, maybe, by some dark inn springing from out the gloom beneath one of the wagons that crowded the courts.

The women of the district were full of gossip and all sorts of wild guesses concerning the mysterious murderer. It was pretty generally agreed, however, that the fiend was a man called Leather Apron, and that he suddenly appeared at various times to several women and given them awful frights. No definite description could be had of him, beyond the statement that he wore a leather apron reaching from his chin to his knees. The fact that he had been seen in various parts of the disordered carelessly along, gave strength to the theory that he was the "Ripper" and you may wager that I kept especially keen watch for anything that looked like leather.

Well, we worked hard, we three Americans. Every night after my work at the theatre, I put on my slum trappings, my friends did the same, and we started out to hunt for the murderer through Whitechapel. It was hard work, for we seldom left the field of our efforts before dawn began to send its mucky-white shafts down among the sleeping, bleary-eyed, carousing denizens.

**Very Little Doing.**

My only adventure during the entire campaign was on the tenth night of my vigil. It was about 3 o'clock in the morning and I was greatly fatigued, and I presume, showed my weariness in my walk. I had disheveled the hair at the back of my wig, and as I wandered carelessly along, I was suddenly arrested by a man who came from behind me. He really seemed to me as if he had sprung out of the earth.

A cold chill went over me as I got the revolver firmly in my grasp, ready to fire into the body of my enemy at a second's warning. I saw a man of apparently 45 years glancing up at me with a gleam of light in his eyes—a wild, demented look. He had a stubby, reddish beard on his chin, and below that a leather apron extending down to his knees.

This, then, was "Leather Apron." Would he grasp me by my head, and, passing a quick hand beneath my chin, cut my throat as the throats of others had been cut? I had not much time for my disposal—in fact, the whole thing was over in a flash. But I did a good deal of thinking during that fateful moment. Then I made a sudden grab at his shoulder with my disengaged hand, but he was too quick for me. He gave me another wild stare, turned suddenly and was off like a shot, running noiselessly but swiftly.

**An Exciting Foot Race.**

I ran after him, and my two friends, seeing this, ran after me. We could not overtake the man, but we notified Scotland Yard, and by great luck more than anything else, "Leather Apron" was apprehended and the newspapers were full of it, all claiming that the "Ripper" had been caught.

But it wasn't the "Ripper" at all. I went down to the court next morning and identified him as the man I had encountered in Dorset street, but it was shown that he was an eccentric but harmless employee in a harness shop in Fleet street, and that his only object in stealing about at night was to frighten women and seek them run.

After two weeks of this sleuthing, my physician told me I would have to give it up. The continuous excitement—or, more properly, suspense—together with the unavoidable loss of sleep, was taking on me and would soon lay me on my back, he said, so I gave up the cause. But I will never forget that experience.

One significant fact, however, marked my connection with the case. I commenced my search two days after the murder of the woman "Hipply Lip Annie," which occurred Sept. 20. Other murders, preceding this one, had been committed at intervals of only a few days. No murders were committed during the period of my sleuthing. Other murders followed close upon the conclusion of our vigil. My deduction was that the "Ripper" knew of our movements, and I believe that to this day.

**Solution of Famous Mystery.**

As to the identity of "Jack the Ripper," both the man and his habits are known. But, mind you, it is only in the last three months that this fact has come out. At the time of which I write London was divided in its opinions. Some thought the work was that of a frenzied sailor—a butcher on one of the cattle transports, who had taken this form of revenge upon those poor outcasts for a fancied wrong. Others held that it was a physician who had suffered in the same way. The latter surmise was correct. It was a physician, a reputable man in London—a perfect Jekyll and Hyde. He had developed a homicidal mania and had been confined in a private sanitarium in a suburb of London. How he escaped was a mystery. But Scotland Yard knows the man today. He is an exile from his country. He lives at Buenos Ayres, in the Argentine republic, and there being no law of extradition that could reach him in England, he is entirely safe there. I have this on the best authority, although this is the first time the facts have been given to the public.

"Jack the Ripper" has not been in evidence since Dr. E. left England. I need hardly say that he is under close surveillance in the Argentine capital, so that there will be no repetition of his offense.

**FRENCH VIEW OF AMERICA.**

**M. Cambon Tells Parisians of the United States.**

(Washington Star.)

Members of the diplomatic corps in Washington have received from Paris copies of "La Vie Illustrée," containing an extended interview with M. Cambon, the French ambassador to Washington, concerning American affairs. It is accompanied by handsome illustrations showing the ambassador in his automobile on Connecticut avenue and in his study at the embassy on the rue de la translation of the interview is as follows:

The interviewer having remarked upon the part which M. Cambon played in the Spanish-American difficulty, and upon scarcity of information as to his activities the latter replied:

"Unfortunately I cannot tell you more than you have read in the yellow book."

"What do you think of the pacification of the Philippines?"

"I believe," said M. Cambon, "that it is very near. The capture of Aguinaldo has put an end to great difficulties. The American government has, moreover, established civil government at Manila."

"In this war the conduct of the American volunteers has been variously judged. What is your opinion of the matter?"

"Your question does not embarrass me in the least. I have a special regard for the American soldier, whether he belongs to the militia or the regular army. He is brave, enduring and humane. You are doubtless aware that the American army, which a few months ago was composed of only 25,000 men, has been raised to 100,000. We have a most admirable set of officers. West Point, which is the military college of the United States, is full of hard workers, where the incomparable mind of the American army are prepared."

"How is the militia, which is the real national militia of the country?"

"By men elected by the governors of the states. At present we are in the presence of a military transformation in America which is not without international significance."

"Since you speak of the governors of the different states, could you, perhaps,

tell me what part they play in the government whole?"

"Properly speaking, they are the presidents of each of the confederated states. Their authority is greater than is generally supposed. In this federation of peoples and states of diverse origin and race it is necessary that their autonomy should be something more than a fiction."

"From an industrial point of view the United States have made real progress; it is even thought that before long they will constitute a real menace to Europe. Is not this one of the hidden reasons of the crisis which Germany is passing through?"

"So people have said. But be that as it may, at the present moment industrial prosperity of the United States can only stimulate our energy. It is an economic struggle which threatens France less than any other country, by reason of the nature of its production. The threatened future of which you speak is very far off. Our great-grandchildren may perhaps see it, unless, indeed, in the meantime many thousands of economies undergo a change. It is wrong to estimate the United States in the same way as one does other powers. As a matter of fact, the states of the Union are not a single country; but, on account of their extent, are more like a continent."

Does this prosperity arise rather from the energy of its people than from the fertility of its soil?"

"You have now named the two powerful factors of the wealth of America. The stern and energetic character of the people have commenced this edifice which excites the admiration of older nations, and nature has finished it."

"In America agricultural exploitation is formidable because the territory is immense. The navigation companies are marvelously organized, for the American rivers are the largest in the world. As to their mineral wealth, this has been so often described that it is unnecessary to refer to it."

"If you add to this fact that America has a metallic reserve unknown in Europe, and that the unproductive region is a vast area, and that everybody invents and trades, you will be able to form an exact idea of the physiognomy of the United States."

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